

XII. REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

This report includes 91 recommendations pertaining to the NDF's fire program. Some are low cost or no cost, while some require considerable planning and resources.

Below is a summary list of all of the recommendations made. Most recommendations are described in further detail in the text. Next to each recommendation is the TriData project team's suggested priority, using the following ranking:

Urgent – Those recommendations that are critical to the delivery of the Division's mission and should be started immediately.

Important – Those recommendations that should be started as soon as possible but which are slightly less critical than those designated as "Urgent."

Needed – Changes that do not have to be made immediately but that should be made or started within the next year.

A few of the recommendations are interdependent, and stand alone. However, for the most part, these recommendations are highly interdependent. In other words, one recommendation supports or depends upon others. That is not to say that, in all cases, making improvements in one part of the Division is contingent on first making improvements in another. To implement these recommendations, the Division will necessarily undertake initiatives in various parts of the Fire Program simultaneously. Many of the recommendations represent a fine-tuning of existing practices. However, together, they should make a significant difference in the quality of the Division's fire program and the ability to manage that program going into the future.

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
IV. Interagency Roles and Responsibilities			
1. If the NDF is to maintain all-risk stations, it should provide at least two-person, 24-hour, seven day per week coverage on the all-risk engines assigned to those stations. Costs associated with this recommendation addressed elsewhere.		√	
2. Organize statewide and interstate mobilization of state and local fire department resources under a unified comprehensive mobilization system. Low cost or no cost. ³²			√
3. Keep NDF staff and the DEM Operations Manager co-located and with a direct relationship. Low cost or no cost.		√	
4. Universally implement unified command on multi-jurisdictional incidents as NDF standard operating procedure. Low cost or no cost.	√		
5. NDF should embrace the Sierra Front Wildfire Cooperators and participate even more in that innovative effort. Low cost or no cost.		√	
6. Use the SFWC cooperative model in other parts of Nevada where a sufficient “center of gravity” exists, e.g. southern Nevada (Clark County) and Elko County. Low cost or no cost.		√	
7. NDF should participate in the Humboldt County Wildfire Support Group. Low cost or no cost.		√	
8. Consider using a version of the Humboldt County Wildfire Support Group cooperative model in other Nevada counties where NDF may not be able to provide adequate staffing resources on its own. Cost: \$20,000/year			√

³² Recommendations labeled “low cost or no cost” can be employed using operational changes and the Division’s current resources.

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
9. Make an orderly transition out of the all-risk emergency service (non-wildland fire) mission in the Sierra Forest Fire Protection District. Cost: \$600,000 - \$700,000 (estimated cost to operate aggressive seasonal program)	√		
10. Retain NDF responsibility for wildland fire management, including wildland fire suppression, in the SFFPD as part of the Division's overall responsibilities as a natural resources agency. Cost: See Above	√		
11. Carson City should not take on wildland fire protection in its portion of SFFPD; NDF should continue in that role at least for the time being. Low cost or no cost.	√		
12. Begin to plan for an orderly transition out of the all-risk emergency service (i.e., the non-wildland fire mission) in the Mount Charleston Fire Protection District within a five-year period. Low cost or no cost.		√	
13. Retain NDF responsibility for wildland fire in the Mount Charleston Fire Protection District. Low cost or no cost.	√		
14. Any contracts with local jurisdictions for fire protection services should specify the level of service to be provided and performance indicators. Low cost or no cost.	√		
V. NDF Regions – Observations and Issues			
15. All fire departments in the Northern Region need to be systematically evaluated by the NDF state office. Low cost or no cost.	√		
16. Reconsider the current funding mechanisms in the Northern Region's three fire protection districts, with the intent of finding ways to more adequately fund the program.			

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
17. NDF staffing in the Northern Region needs to be increased. Cost: \$718,000/year \$374,000/year (Grade 33 x 5 positions) \$127,600/year (Grade 31 x 2 positions) \$155,000/year (Seasonal Extension) \$61,000/year (Grade 26 x 2 positions)	√		
18. Assign a seasonally staffed engine led by a career Captain to White Pine County. Cost: \$75,000/year + \$230,000 (one-time engine cost); cost of personnel included in Recommendation 17	√		
19. Address critical training capacity issues in the Northern Region. Low cost or no cost.	√		
20. Obtain the services of a communications technician in the Northern Region (either an NDF employee or contracted by NDF), as done in Elko County. Cost: \$5,000 - \$81,000/year, depending on choice made.	√		
21. Improve apparatus maintenance in the Northwest Region. Low cost or no cost.	√		
22. Build cooperative bridges to the Ely FD. Low cost or no cost.		√	
23. Provide information and training in White Pine County on the federal grant process. Low cost or no cost.	√		
24. Re-locate the NDF Battalion Chief to an office in the Town of Eureka. Low cost or no cost.	√		
25. Reconsider the current funding mechanisms in the Northern region's three fire protection districts, with the intent of finding ways to more adequately fund the program. Cost not yet determined. Requires additional study.	√		

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
26. Integrate NDF career and seasonal fire resources in the Western Region under a revised field organization chart. Low cost or no cost.		√	
27. Obtain state funding for the Southern Region's FMO position. Cost: \$91,300/year (Grade 37)			√
28. Hold high-level discussions between the State Office and Las Vegas Interagency Dispatch Center (LVIDC) Board of Directors to resolve the issue of NDF's future involvement in LVIDC. Low cost or no cost.		√	
29. Examine alternative funding mechanisms for the Southern Region's three counties remaining outside of NDF coverage (Lincoln, Esmeralda, and Nye). Low cost or no cost.		√	
30. Address the administrative staffing and training issues in the Southern Region office. Cost not yet determined. Requires additional study.			√
31. Improve maintenance support either by adding an additional mechanic for the region, contracting out, or providing additional maintenance support through the Southern Region's conservation camps. Cost: \$130,000/year (Grade 32 x 2 positions)			√
32. Staff the Southern Region so that fuels work may be done on private lands. Price not yet determined. Requires additional study.			√
33. Assure that the Southern Region's camps are able to reliably perform their critical fire support mission with adequate crew availability. Low cost or no cost.	√		
VI. Stakeholders' Views and Concerns			
34. NDF should review and revise as necessary all cooperative agreements with local government cooperators and maintain cooperative agreements with federal cooperators. Low cost or no cost.		√	

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
35. Enhance the NDF mitigation grant administration capability. Facilitate and speed-up the grant application and grant-making process. Low cost or no cost.		√	
36. Establish a formal human resources function in the NDF. Cost: \$105,000/year (Grade 41)	√		
37. Ensure that all employees are aware of the Division's health and wellness program and its intent. Low cost or no cost.			√
38. Contract to develop and implement an aggressive supervisory and leadership training curriculum in the NDF. Cost: \$20,000/year		√	
39. Develop a communications plan for NDF, and undertake immediate efforts to open better lines of communication between the NDF State Office and its field personnel. Low cost or no cost.	√		
VII. Fire Prevention and Mitigation			
40. Continue to expand the Division's efforts to become proactive in forest health and fuels management, and to strengthen prevention. Low cost or no cost.			√
41. Strengthen the agency's coordination of its fire prevention and mitigation at all levels of NDF statewide. Cost: \$86,000/year (Grade 36)			√
42. Develop a statewide plan for fire prevention and mitigation. Low cost or no cost.			√
43. Promote community-based fire safe councils and help them provide a consistent public education message. Low cost or no cost.		√	
44. Sustain the current initiative of the Division's resource management program staff to train fire program personnel on how to plan and implement thinning prescriptions. Cost: \$423,000/year (Grade 33 x 6 Positions)		√	

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
45. Have at least one full-time prevention specialist per region. Cost: \$152,000/year (Grade 33 x 2 Positions)			√
46. Continue the Division's use of non-fire alternatives (such as mowing and opportunistic seeding). Low cost or no cost.			√
VIII. Pre-Suppression, Dispatching, and Support			
47. Develop an adequate statewide fire apparatus and equipment maintenance capability either in-house or by contract. Cost: \$100,000 + (supplies, materials, tools, equipment, etc. - does not include personnel, which are addressed elsewhere)	√		
48. Establish a vehicle replacement program that assures a safe and reliable fleet of Conservation Camp Vehicles going into the future. Cost: \$1,000,000/year (8-9 vehicles/year)	√		
49. Decrease the Division's dependence on FEPP. Cost: \$100,000/year			√
50. Provide more training to NDF personnel assigned to interagency dispatch centers. Low cost or no cost.		√	
51. Develop NDF capabilities in the area of support dispatching, procurement and purchasing. Low cost or no cost.		√	
52. Correct communication disparities between NDF regions. Price not yet determined. Requires additional study.	√		
53. Work with cooperators to assure that interoperable radio communications systems are in place. Low cost or no cost.	√		
54. Engage in collaborative planning with NDF's local and federal cooperators regarding the 800 MHz radio system. Low cost or no cost.	√		

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
55. Undertake a system-wide assessment of NDF communications to determine (a) where there are system dead spots, (b) where there are inadequate numbers of radios, and (c) other communication system adequacy or reliability issues. Develop a plan for correcting system deficiencies. Low cost or no cost.	√		
56. The aviation plan should try to assure that NDF helicopters are located where they best support the NDF mission and its cooperators. Cost: \$5,000 - \$81,000/year		√	
57. Seek resources (pilots) to allow the second NDF helicopter to move up into initial attack-ready status when the first helicopter is dispatched. Low cost or no cost.			√
58. Seek resources that would enable NDF to employ a second, dedicated pilot for its fixed-wing aircraft. Cost: \$99,000/year (Grade 39)			√
59. Maintain NDF's system for staffing and managing its helicopters. The use of inmates is cost-effective. Some of the perceived problems might be remedied by involving the federal cooperators in the planning and management of the program. Low cost or no cost.	√		
60. Conduct further research into the performance of NDF helicopters at high elevations. Low or no Cost			√
61. The Conservation Camp Program should at a minimum remain at current levels, regardless of NDF's mission regarding fire initial attack or direct provision of fire protection services in fire protection districts. Low cost or no cost.	√		
62. Reorganize the Conservation Camp program within NDF to provide clearer, direct reporting lines of authority. Low cost or no cost.	√		
63. Develop and operate a single training camp. Price not yet determined. Requires additional study.		√	

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
64. Assign trainers and mechanics directly to the Conservation Camps. Low cost or no cost.			
65. Improve relevance and convenience of training for local government firefighters. Low cost or no cost.		√	
66. Assure appropriate application of work capacity tests to the NDF workforce. Low cost or no cost.	√		
67. Resolve physical fitness and Work Capacity Test application issues with local government forces. Low cost or no cost.		√	
68. Improve capacities to train conservation crew supervisors. Cost: \$80,000/year	√		
69. Improve and stabilize the NDF training budget. Cost: \$130,000/year		√	
70. Develop an effective system for issuing Incident Qualification Cards (red cards) to local government firefighters. Cost: \$5,000		√	
71. Consider whether the Division requires both a dedicated Training Officer and a dedicated Safety Officer. Low cost or no cost.			√
IX. Fire Suppression and First Responder Roles			
72. Revisit the rates paid to NDF associated volunteer fire departments with the intent of improving them. Price not yet determined. Requires additional study.		√	
73. Establish the NDF fire suppression program on a more stable, statewide base. Price not yet determined. Requires additional study.	√		

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
X. Revenue and Budget			
74. Establish a budget system that allocates NDF's funds to major program budgets (Fire, Resources, Administration, etc). Low cost or no cost.	√		
75. Define a base level fire program budget describing what NDF requires to fund its core fire protection program, excluding one-time project and pass-through money. Low cost or no cost.	√		
76. Develop a work planning and monitoring process that is linked to program-specific budgets. Low cost or no cost.		√	
77. Revenue produced by the Conservation Camps that exceeds what is needed to pay for the operation of the Conservation Camps should return to the Camp program (and not the State General Fund) and used for the purposes of off-setting the costs of vehicle replacement. Low cost or no cost.			√
78. Implement a system that captures all individual fire costs (both NDF and non-NDF) using the existing state accounting system or other means. Low cost or no cost.	√		
79. The Nevada Legislature should increase the NDF budget annually by \$15.4 million (52%) and provide \$880,000 in one-time costs for implementation in the next biennium.	√		
XI. Organizational Strategy for the Future			
80. Seek legislation that revises or replaces NRS 473 with legislation that clearly establishes NDF authority, responsibility, and jurisdiction in Nevada Revised Statutes. Low cost or no cost.	√		
81. Undertake immediate efforts to improve lines of communication between the state office and the Division's field personnel. Low cost or no cost.	√		

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
82. Establish a comprehensive strategy and fire protection system for NDF that meets the modern needs of Nevada and its citizens. Low cost or no cost.	√		
83. The primary role of NDF should be as a comprehensive wildland fire management agency. Low cost or no cost.	√		
84. Employ the Fire Planning Analysis System (FPA) to determine the Division's "most efficient level" in the existing NRS 473 Districts. Low cost or no cost.		√	
85. Devolve all-risk emergency services to the counties in the rapidly urbanizing Sierra Front region. Low cost or no cost.	√		
86. Continue the NDF transitional all-risk emergency service role in Clark, Elko, Eureka, and White Pine Counties until such time as those responsibilities can be devolved to the counties. Low cost or no cost.	√		
87. Replace or amend NRS 473 with a statute or statutes authorizing the formation of fire protection districts that reflect modern operational conditions and realities. Low cost or no cost.	√		
88. Protect Nevada's natural resources, people and property from wildland fire by establishing forest fire protection districts separate from the county fire protection districts that were formed primarily to protect structures or provide EMS and rescue (NRS 474 districts). Price not yet determined. Requires additional study.	√		
89. Working collaboratively with the Department of Emergency Management, establish NDF as the agency responsible for coordinating statewide mobilization of local government fire resources. Cost: \$78,000/year (Grade 36) \$13,000/year (operating expenses)		√	

Recommendation	Urgent	Important	Needed
90. NDF should consider pursuing a block exchange program with BLM and the Forest Service. Low cost or no cost.		√	
91. NDF should assume responsibility (with commensurate funding and resources) for mobilizing large fire support to non-NDF districted counties and providing assistance or assuming incident command when large fires occur. Cost: \$7,000,000/year (estimated \$6,000,000 supplemental above current level)		√	

Note: All personnel costs use “loaded” rates that include benefits, taxes, etc and include an additional 10% to account for training, uniforms, office costs, etc. (except where operating costs are specified.)